GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:208
ANSWERED ON:30.11.2016
Telecom Facility to Villages
Puttaraju Shri C.S.;Siddeshwara Shri Gowdar Mallikarjunappa

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of villages in the country are yet to be connected with telecom facilities particularly mobile telephones and if so, the number of villages covered along with those yet to be covered with mobile telephones, State-wise;

(b) the details of mobile towers and telephone exchanges installed and proposed to be installed in the country to provide telephone connectivity to the left out villages/areas during the last three years and the current year, State-wise, separately in rural and urban areas;

(c) the details of villages proposed to be covered with telephone facilities during the current Five Year Plan, State-wise; and

(d) the time by which all the villages are proposed to be covered with telecom facility and the action taken by the Government to achieve the target?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE (IC) OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS &
MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS
(SHRI MANOJ SINHA)

(a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE LOK SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO.208 FOR 30TH NOVEMBER, 2016 REGARDING "TELECOM FACILITY TO VILLAGES".

(a) The Government is committed to provide a robust telecom service in all parts of the country including rural, backward & hilly areas. There are 55,669 villages (As per a survey conducted in 2014) in the country that do not have mobile coverage. State-wise list of total inhabited villages and uncovered villages is at Annexure-I.

(b) Details of number of towers in rural and urban areas are not being maintained separately by the Department of Telecommunication and no new telephone exchanges has been installed during last three years and current year. However, Licensed Service Area wise details of Base Transceiver Stations (BTSs) installed during the last three financial years and current financial year (till 30.09.2016) and total BTSs as on 30.09.2016 are at Annexure-II.

(c)&(d) Mobile coverage to these uncovered villages is likely to be provided in a phased manner, subject to availability of financial resources. Government has prioritized to provide mobile communication services in uncovered villages in LWE affected areas, North-Eastern States, Island territories, and Himalayan States and Western Border States in the first phase, with financial support from USO Fund, as detailed below:

(i) Government approved a proposal on 10.09.2014 to implement a Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan for the North-Eastern Region at an estimated expenditure of Rs. 5336.18 crore. The project envisages provision of mobile coverage to 8621 identified uncovered villages, installation of 321 mobile tower sites along National Highways and strengthening of transmission network in the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim and Tripura. State-wise details are enclosed as Annexure-III.

(ii) Government, on 20.08.2014, approved a project to provide Mobile Services in 2199 locations in Left Wing Extremism (LWE) affected areas in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal, at an estimated expenditure of Rs. 3567.58 crore. The project is being executed by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL). 2186 mobile towers are radiating as on 21.11.2016. State-wise details are enclosed as Annexure-IV.

(iii) Telecom Commission has given 'in principle' approval on 07.11.2014 for Comprehensive Telecom Development Plan including provision of mobile connectivity for Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep Islands with the total estimated investment of Rs. 221.05 crores. The project will provide mobile communication in 181 uncovered villages in A&N Islands and strengthen the communication in 10 villages of Lakshadweep Islands.